

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 252

By Casada

A RESOLUTION to honor the life of Chief Petty Officer Ross Bigger, United States Navy, Retired.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly wish to commemorate the bountiful life of Chief Petty Officer Ross Bigger, United States Navy, Retired, who so ably served this great nation and the State of Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, a native Tennessean born in Williamson County on August 23, 1932, Ross Bigger was the son of Ples Brown Bigger and Lear McCall Bigger; and

WHEREAS, possessed with an inspirational sense of duty even as a young man, Ross Bigger enlisted in the United States Navy at the age of eighteen in July 1951, to embark on what would become a thirty-year career in the armed forces; and

WHEREAS, rising to the rank of Chief Petty Officer and Chief Boiler Technician, Ross Bigger rendered sterling service as a boiler technician aboard a number of ships and aircraft carriers during his career, including the USS *Horace A. Bass*, USS *Rich*, USS *Kearsarge*, USS *Oxford*, USS *Bon Homme Richard*, USS *Coral Sea*, USS *Kitty Hawk*, and the USS *Pawcatuck*; and

WHEREAS, a highlight of his naval career that he often shared with family and friends was his service aboard the USS *Kearsarge* in the Pacific Ocean when it recovered *Sigma 7* capsule astronauts Walter Schirra and Gordon Cooper; and

WHEREAS, in recognition of his distinguished military service, Chief Petty Officer Bigger received numerous service awards and medals, including the China Service Medal, the National Defense Service Medal with one Bronze Star, the Korean Service Medal, the United Nations Service Medal, the Vietnam Service Medal with two Bronze Stars, the Republic of Vietnam

Campaign Medal, four Good Conduct Medals, the Navy Unit Commendation Ribbon with three Bronze Stars, and the Navy Achievement Medal; and

WHEREAS, receiving his honorable discharge from the U.S. Navy in April 1972, Mr. Bigger continued his military service in the United States Naval Fleet Reserve until July 1981, retiring at the rank of Chief Petty Officer; and

WHEREAS, after his retirement from the Navy, Ross Bigger enjoyed a very successful career as a boiler operator, becoming one of the most sought after and knowledgeable experts in the field and serving as the Boiler Operator Supervisor for the State of Tennessee at the Central State facility for a number of years before his retirement. He subsequently held similar positions at St. Thomas Hospital in Nashville and at Pirelli Armstrong in Madison; and

WHEREAS, a kind and generous gentleman who never met a stranger, Mr. Bigger enjoyed gardening and assisting fellow veterans in obtaining their Veterans Administration benefits, providing transportation and assistance to appointments and facilities; and

WHEREAS, a devoted husband and father, Ross Bigger enjoyed the love and companionship of his wife of fifty-seven years, Jean, and their four children; and

WHEREAS, from time to time, the members of this General Assembly have seen fit to name certain highways and bridges to honor the memory of those courageous individuals who have made a substantial and positive impact on the people of Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly have voted to name the bridge spanning Cove Branch on State Route 11 (Horton Highway) in Williamson County in memory of this beloved resident of Williamson County; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should remember Ross Bigger, an exceptional sailor, public servant, and human being, on this special occasion; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we honor the distinguished memory and celebrate the productive life of Chief Petty Officer Ross Bigger, United States Navy, Retired, a great Tennessean, on the

occasion of the dedication of the "Ross Bigger Memorial Bridge" over Cove Branch in Williamson County.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.